

- (ii) OP towers by BSF have been erected.
- (iii) Binoculars, Goggles, Twin, telescopes, PNV binoculars and hand held search lights have been provided to Patrolling parties for enhanced vigilance on the border.
- (iv) Jeeps, tractors and camels have been provided for intensified patrolling on the border.
- (v) Border fencing and flood lighting has been done/ is being done at a fast pace.
- (vi) Border road/tracks are being constructed/developed for vehicular patrolling.
- (vii) Instructions have been issued to all the enforcement agencies to maintain utmost vigil along the border areas.
- (viii) Training is being imparted to officers to improve effectiveness.
- (ix) Reward schemes for informers and enforcement officers are being implemented.
- (x) Quarterly coordination meetings are being held which are attended by all enforcement agencies involved in curbing drug trafficking, under a bilateral agreement with Pakistan periodic meetings are taking place at Secretary and D.G. Level.

In addition, contact points have been designated by the two countries for direct operation communication.

Research Contract with USA

601. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Wild Life Institute of India, Dehradun has signed a research contract with the United States Department of Agriculture;
- (b) if so, the date of its signing and the details of the contract;
- (c) the rationale behind signing this contract and the likely benefits to be accrued therefrom to India;
- (d) whether the Government have examined the impact of such contract to the extent of its affecting India's invaluable bio-diversity being patented and used in the United States; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Director, Wild Life Institute of India (WII) Dehradun, had signed an agreement with the

United States Department of Agriculture on 24th November 1995. The agreement contained 17 clauses of general provisions applicable to Foreign Agricultural Research Grants. The signing of agreement was required to indicate the acceptance of a grant of Rs. 96,90,000 to WII for the research project entitled, "Management of Forests in India for Biological Diversity and Forest Productivity—an Ecosystem Perspective". The main objective of the project is to evaluate the impacts of forestry practices and the use of forest products by people, the methods of harvesting and collection on forest diversity and documentation of conservation problems.

(d) and (e) The United States Department of Agriculture have conveyed that the kind of product expected out of this Project, guides and planning documents, would not be subject to licences or patents and, therefore, Patent and Licence Rights Clause does not apply to the agreement.

Official Secret Act, 1923

602. DR. M. JAGANNATH :

SHRI RAM SAGAR :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Fifth Pay Commission has made a recommendation to the effect that the citizens should have a right to information and the work of the Government should not be shrouded in mystery and the Official Secrets Act;
- (b) whether British rules, the framers of the Act have already amended this Act in 1989 making way for a more open Government;
- (c) whether Government of India also propose to amend the Official Secrets Act;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Supreme Court had taken any view on the writ petition filed against the Union Government challenging among other things Section 5 of the Official Secrets Act, 1923; and
- (f) if not, the action taken by the Government to expedite the matter in the Supreme Court ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) The Fifth Pay Commission have recommended the passing of a Right to information Act with built-in safeguards to ensure the privacy of national interests as also the privacy of the individual citizen.

(b) The Official Secrets Act of U.K. has been